

REMARKS

Claims 1-12, 14-16 and 18-20 are all the claims presently pending in the application. Claims 13 and 17 have been canceled. Claims 14 and 18 have been amended to more particularly define the invention.

It is noted that the claim amendments are made only for more particularly pointing out the invention, and not for distinguishing the invention over the prior art, narrowing the claims or for any statutory requirements of patentability. Further, Applicant specifically states that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges that claims 1-12 are allowed and claims 14-16 and 18-20 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant notes that claims 14 and 18 have been re-written in independent form as suggested by the Examiner and, therefore, all of the claims are in condition for immediate allowance.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-12, 14-16 and 18-20, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

Serial No. 10/014,508
Docket No. 382472/00

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The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

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